

Planning Meeting of Thompson Parish Council

to be held in

Thompson Village Hall on Monday 17 October 2016

Commencing at 7:30 pm

Present: Kate Winslow (Chair), Duncan Gregory (Vice-chair), Alan Dujon, Jean Kaye, Irene Smith, Ian Robertson, 10 members of the public and the Parish Clerk.

1 Apologies for absence: None.

2 Declaration of Interest: None.

3 Planning Applications:

3.1 Application 3PL/2016/1122/F - Erection of 2 new dwellings on garden/amenity land at 36 Pockthorpe lane, Thompson, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 1PN: There being much public interest in this application the Chair suspended the meeting to allow public participation, asking those wishing to speak to restrict their comments to the application under discussion. Mrs Burton addressed her concerns about the effect of two extra dwellings on the already poor water pressure in Pockthorpe Lane and the additional traffic in the narrow lane both during and after construction, with vehicles frequently turning in her driveway and that of the bungalow opposite. In reply Mr Scott, applicant, pointed out that with regard to water supply the Water Companies were required to offer a suitable supply and that as such this was not considered by the planners. With regard to the traffic situation he said that a turning circle was incorporated into the plans, this would reduce the volume of traffic reversing down the lane, in addition he noted that the narrowness of the land was exacerbated by boundaries encroaching over Highways land. Mr Welch said that he thought that the problem was one of precedence, allowing building at the extremities of the village, outside the settlement boundary would lead to ribbon development as others copied this example. Mr Scott said that the situation of the proposed site at the edge of the village were unique and hence should not lead to ribbon development. The issue of the soft road between the two proposed sites for the dwellings should be resolved prior to any decision being taken and further disquiet about traffic on the narrowest parts of Pockthorpe Lane were also expressed. Mr Scott said that the access to the sites were from land not under dispute and that the turning circle would do much to alleviate the traffic problem.

The meeting was restarted: Councillor Alan Dujon said he had received verbal objections from more than 6 residents of Pockthorpe Lane for various reasons and wished to place these objections on record. The development is outside the settlement boundary and the 2016 Thompson Village appraisal was overwhelmingly in favour of retaining the existing settlement boundary and which is the preferred option for Thompson in the discussion document for the forthcoming 20 year Breckland Local Plan. The displayed planning notice stated that the proposed planning application was not in accord the provisions of the development plan in force in the area. Thus, the application is inappropriate. Alan Dujon continued that Norfolk County Council had declared a route from the end of Pockthorpe Lane to Sparrow Hill as a soft road no notice of this has been taken on the application nor is the route noted other than as a grey shaded area on some plans. The route is currently barred and he felt that no planning decision should be made until such times as this matter is concluded and if necessary the plans and application take note of the soft road. Breckland Council has "known constraints" for consideration regarding development which include; Sewage systems, Roads, Road safety, and items such as broadband and mobile phone usability.

Pockthorpe Lane has no public sewage and has problems with the drainage of surface water. Any additional housing will serve to further exacerbate the problems with the loss of the building footprint as an area of natural drainage and would add to the problems with extra water being discharged to the land from the sewage system. Given

the high water on the south side of Pockthorpe lane during the wetter months of the year it would seem reasonable to insist that percolation tests take place during the wetter months of the year. Pockthorpe Lane is a narrow road and totally unsuitable for construction traffic, as damage could be caused to the roadway itself along with the soft verges and side drains. The lane is without footpaths and any increase in traffic will make the road more dangerous for pedestrians. Thompson has poor broadband and Pockthorpe Lane cannot receive the recently installed wireless broadband from Wispire. In addition, the mobile phone coverage is poor. Thompson as a village with a settlement boundary is considered to be a low growth village and for Breckland development purposes growth/development needs to show an economic need, needs local support, should meet normal planning constraints and have environmental support ability already in place. At least some and possibly all are not met.

Councillor Jean Kaye said that although the proposed properties are very attractive they are outside the settlement boundary and that this was against the wishes of the majority of villagers.

Councillor Irene Smith said that she was concerned about pedestrian access through the narrowest sections Pockthorpe Lane.

Councillor Duncan Gregory said that he thought it necessary to take note of the view of the parishioners who wanted the settlement boundary retained with little to no growth. Councillor Kate Winslow pointed out that the recent village appraisal had shown that the appraisal was replied to by, in excess of, 85% of households in the village and that of the 281 respondents to questions about the settlement boundary, over 80% wanted to keep the settlement boundary in some form and that almost 72% wanted to see it remain unchanged. About 63% of respondents felt that the village could not accommodate more housing.

On a vote the members of Thompson Parish Council unanimously voted in objection to the application.

- 4 Resignation of Andrew Wagner from Thompson Parish Council:** Kate Winslow said that Andrew Wagner had resigned as a member of Thompson Parish Council and expressed her thanks for the valuable work that he had done during his period as a Councillor, his input would be sorely missed. These feelings were echoed by the remaining Parish Councillors. The Breckland Returning Officer has been notified of the vacancy and the vacancy will be advertised.
- 4.1 Appointment of Councillor to check quarterly bank reconciliations:** The Council's Financial Regulations require that the Responsible Financial Officer's quarterly bank reconciliations are checked by a Councillor. This was previously done by Andrew Wagner and following his resignation a replacement need be appointed. Jean Kaye proposed and Duncan Gregory seconded that Alan Dujon be appointed to carry out this function and was carried unanimously.
- 5 Date of Next meeting:** Tuesday 29 November 2016
- 6 Any other business (for agenda of next meeting):**